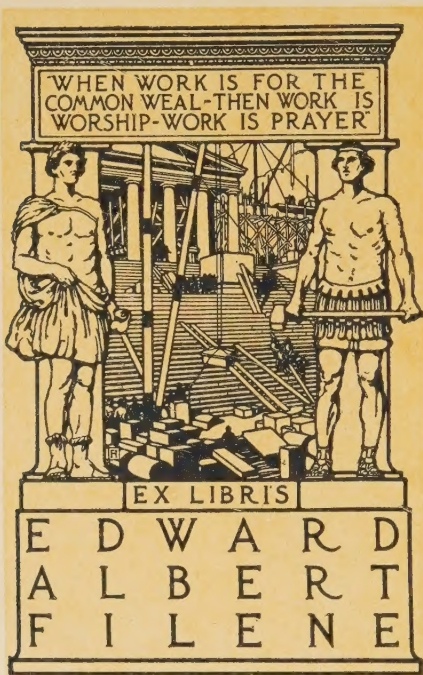


SONGS *of the* CRAFT

*By*

HENRY EDWARD WARNER



Rollins College  
Library



with my compliments to the  
Industrial Baby of Mass  
Production and Distribution —  
and wishing that those principles  
might be applied to my books!  
Henry Edward Warner

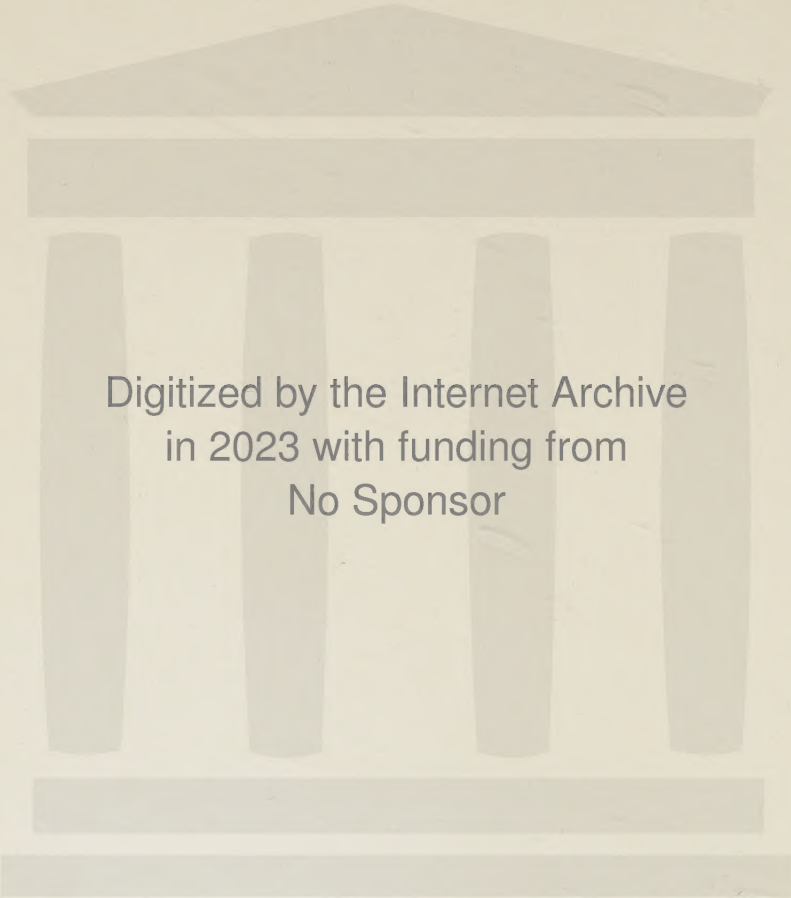
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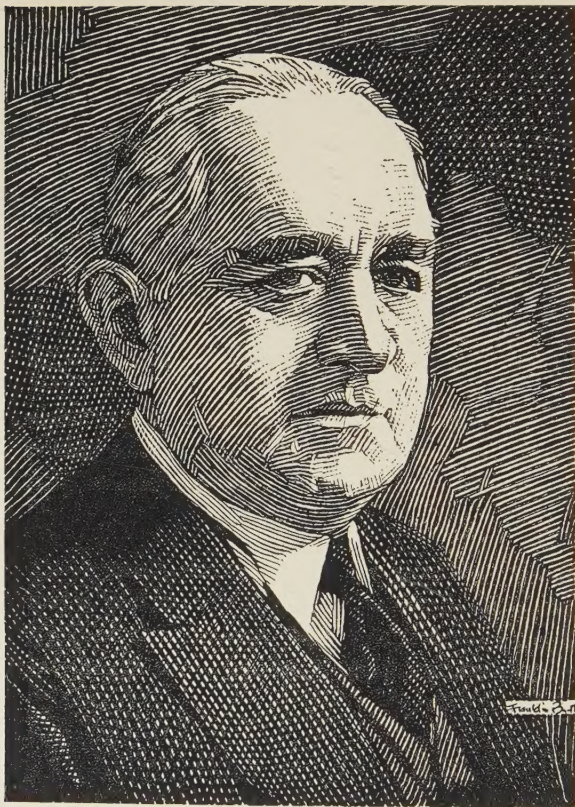


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# SONGS OF THE CRAFT





*A Drawing of Mr. Ochs By Franklin Booth*



## TO ADOLPH S. OCHS

*(To whom this volume is dedicated)*

**W**HEN I was a kid in a one-horse town that is anchored in Moccasin Bend,  
A town that is hugged in the Tennessee's flow to the Gulf at the country's  
end,

I had fixed my star where a busy man sat at a desk that was big and plain,  
And I wondered how all the things he knew could be packed in a single brain!

I would watch him work, I could HEAR him think! . . . And I dreamed that the  
time might be

When some other cub with a hope like mine might set his star on me!

I studied my star with a wishful heart; I builded my castles fair . . .

I builded my castles of mist o'dreams . . . and I left my conquests there!

The star of my kid days ran undimm'd the course of its Fates, and gleamed  
Brighter and brighter, and farther off, while the cub in his castle dreamed! . . .  
And the kid still sits, when the night is fair, watching the stars march by,  
And the star of his youth is the brightest light that shines in the crowded sky!



"We need in this country a literature of the newspaper and the making thereof. Years ago, I had hoped that Kipling would develop into the man who would produce it, but I am afraid he has slipped."

GEORGE E. MILLER,  
*Editor-in-Chief of The Detroit News.*

(From a statement made a number of years ago)

"I think 'Songs of the Craft' meets the demand mentioned above."

JAMES MELVIN LEE,  
*Director, Department of Journalism,  
New York University*



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# SONGS OF THE CRAFT

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*By*  
HENRY EDWARD WARNER

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RANSDELL INC.  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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By WILLIAM BRADFORD  
MEMORIAL COMMITTEE



## AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

May I, in a word, emphasize in this place the sincere affection with which this volume is dedicated to my cub-days chief, Adolph S. Ochs. And may I in his name dedicate it, in a much wider sense, as Adolph Ochs himself would have it dedicated, to all whose pulses leap to the roar of printing presses, and to all those for whom the presses turn out life's only indispensable thing—the Printed Word? To say it as I wish it, may I include in the dedication all that splendid brotherhood known as Humanity, for after all, under the direction of the Master Craftsman we are of a family—we who make the Printed Word, and you who read it.

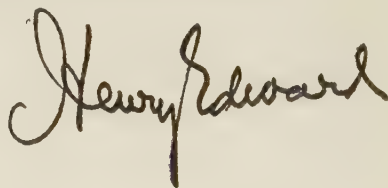
These songs were written originally through sheer love of the craft itself, and the same motive actuates their preservation in book form and their presentation by the author to the William Bradford Memorial Fellowship in Journalism at New York University. Only I know how earnestly my dear friend, Dr. James Melvin Lee, Director of Journalism at that University and author, among other things, of "Journalism in America," desires that they serve this purpose well. And only I know and am in a position to tell, how much of his personal time John H. Ransdell has given to the supervision of publication, and with what craft-loyalty the Ransdell shop has attended the birth of this book.

If Jimmy hadn't suggested it, there would have been no book. If Jack had lacked the soul of an artist and the craft-love that removes men from the commonplace of business, it would have died with the suggestion.

When Jack told me that he had gone to New York and secured the services of Franklin Booth to do the frontispiece, I was tickled sick. Booth, you know, started life as a newspaper artist in Indian-

apolis, but Riley's State couldn't hold him. Jack is here with me now, at my home on the Severn River in Maryland, going over the final proofs, generously finding little fault and extravagantly agreeing to author's revisions.


A week ago I was calling him Mr. Ransdell. And if just publishing the book draws men that close together, Jimmy and Jack and I feel sure that this little collection will strengthen the tie that binds those in whose blood run black corpuscles of printer's ink. When the book is out Jimmy is coming down from New York for a weekend, and he and Jack and I are going to make spiritual whoopee over the glories of the moonpath that stretches from the rippling sheen just beyond my harp o' trees to the portals of Dreamland, up yonder where the Big Round Moon guards the souls of unborn babies and fixes the destinies of nations. And the dearest wish of my heart is that you who read and understand could be there with us.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Henry Edward". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Henry" and the last name "Edward" written in a single, continuous line.

Warlee-on-the-Severn.

April 13, 1929.

## PREFACE

HEN Henry Edward Warner was contributing each week a poem to *The Editor and Publisher and Fourth Estate* his verses were constantly clipped and carried around in pocketbooks or pasted in scrap books. To him came frequent requests for publication of "Songs of the Craft" in book form. The poems were "live matter" and were never "overset." They smelled of printer's ink and had the rhythm of the roar of the multiple press. That's why practical newspaper men desired book publication.

Almost from cradle days the author of these verses was interested in journalism. When only eleven years of age he established his own weekly newspaper in the suburbs of Los Angeles, California—a sheet which he published on a little hand press so small that he had to set, print and distribute one page at a time, though editions often ran eight and twelve pages. To honor this early venture he has inserted a poem in the volume.

From the days of this maiden attempt Mr. Warner has never engaged in anything but newspaper work—except for two years when he was a general press representative—first for Mme. Sarah Bernhardt on her farewell tour of America and then for the Shubert Theatrical Enterprises with headquarters in New York City.

Mr. Warner is now connected with *The Sunpapers* of Baltimore, where he has been since 1914. Previous to that year he was connected successively with *The Knoxville Sentinel*, *The Chattanooga Press*, *The Chattanooga Times*, *The Baltimore News*, *The Denver Times*, and *The St. Paul Dispatch*.

Poetry has ever been in his blood, for early in life he began to write verses and songs. Of the latter special mention may be made

of his classic doll song, "I've Got a Pain in My Sawdust." This was written in 1909 for Kittie Cheatham, who introduced it immediately on a concert tour of the world. As a matter of fact, the author occasionally sings this song himself to the delight of his friends.

He was the father of the American Press Humorists Association which flourished in those days before railroads had abolished passes to gentlemen of the press—as is brought out in one of his poems.

In addition to his work on *The Sunpapers*, he finds time to lecture, to interpret his verses at various entertainments, and to broadcast regularly. Weekly "he takes the air" to give his verses and songs to the Home Circle. As I have already pointed out, "Songs of the Craft" now appear in book form in response to that definite and widespread demand which developed when the poems first broke into type and sang their way into the hearts of newspaper men. But Mr. Warner is not only the poet of the press, but is author of thousands of verses on every angle. These were published over many years in the newspaper columns which he conducted but have never been gathered together in permanent form. He is now engaged, I am glad to say, in collecting and revising them for book publication. "Songs of the Craft" has the honor of being the first of the series.

The dedication of the volume by Mr. Warner to Adolph S. Ochs, publisher of *The New York Times*, is most appropriate. The latter was the author's cub-day chief in Chattanooga. Those who have been privileged to walk with Mr. Ochs through the woods back of his summer home on the shores of Lake George and have listened to him chat about Chattanooga days have seen something of the man that Mr. Warner knew when the weekly payroll was hard to meet and advertising was not crowded out because of lack of space.

The dedication of the volume to Mr. Ochs is as clean an expres-



sion of the author's love for the craft as is the presentation of the work to a fund for the establishment of the William Bradford Memorial Fellowship in Journalism at New York University to honor the memory of the first newspaper publisher in New York who was also the first printer in the Middle Colonies.

"Songs of the Craft" is published as the only collection in the world of verse descriptive of the life through which printed human communication is made possible. In every detail it is the product of craftsmen of whom the author sings. They made it, lingering over the lines they set in type and sent through the presses. A work of such literary and historic significance needed but one illustration, and for this—the pen sketch of Adolph S. Ochs—we felt it necessary to secure the services of an outstanding pen and ink artist who was himself one of the newspaper craft. Franklin Booth was a newspaper artist in Indianapolis until his work attracted attention which has grown into international recognition, forcing him into wider fields.

The verses herein were written by a man whose very blood is printer's ink and whose bones are the steel of the printing press. Because he has wiped his hands on the office towel and has yelled the extra editions on the curb of city streets, he knows the life which he sings. That's why his songs have struck so responsive a chord in the hearts of his fellows in the craft. They were written as a labor of love. That he may remain as usefully in the craft until (30) is written by the Master Editor is the sincere wish of his friend of many years.

JAMES MELVIN LEE.

Department of Journalism,  
New York University,  
April 11, 1929.



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# SONGS OF THE CRAFT



## TO THOSE WHO DREAMED

### I

**W**HETHER it started in Ching Ling's day  
With the old Pekin Gazette,  
Or whether the Roman was first to play  
The news and gossip of what they say  
In the Acta Diurna—well, anyway,  
The presses are running yet!

Whether boys playing with tin cans tied  
To a piece of tight-drawn twine  
Started the highway for words to ride  
To the printing shop from the world outside,  
It got to Morse, and for reaching wide,  
Hats off to the telegraph line!

And whether the Cave-Man carving Fate  
In the side of his cliff gave birth  
To the wooden cut and the old chalk plate,  
I do not know; but at any rate,  
Zinc art harks far to the Cave-Man's date  
And the Camera belts the Earth.

Gutenberg dreamed of an empire; yes,  
But he carved his types in wood.  
His best was the Mule of the printing press,

## TO THOSE WHO DREAMED

But it printed his paper, and that, I guess,  
Is the object of rotaries, more or less—  
Or so I have understood.

### II

So click, ye Matrices! Fall into place  
From steel that thinks like a man!  
Flood them, Metal, and Galleys, race  
That last stick dumped in the starter chase  
For the dope, the soup, the Plate to embrace  
Its Cylinder spick and span!

Ho! press the button! . . . Stand back! . . . All right!  
She moves! . . . She speeds! With a roar  
Like mighty Niagara, she leaps to the fight,  
Eating a roll at a single bite,  
And the last of a hundred tons of white  
Is waste on the press room floor!

Come, Gutenberg! . . . Come, Morse! Come, ye  
Who pinned your faith to a thought!  
You dreamed so well of the things to be,  
Come take a walk through the Plant with me—  
Come out from your winding sheets and see  
What you and God have wrought!



## THE EDITOR

**T**HE editor sat in his easy chair  
Smoking a fat cigar;  
His chest stuck out, and he wore an air  
Richer than King or Czar.  
He touched a bell, and he ordered wine  
With the style of a lazy Turk,  
And he lolled 'way back and murmured: "It's fine,  
Living so free from work!

"For I don't have to hustle at all," he said;  
"I don't have to toil a bit!  
The censor, he cuts my news for me  
And the copy desk edits it!  
And Veritas, Reader, E Pluribus,  
Brutus and old Fair Play,  
Admirer, Citizen, Ultimus—  
They work for me every day!

"Oh, the editor's life is the life for me,  
Playing the whole day long  
Careless and happy and wild and free,  
With wine and women and song!  
I just touch the bell when I need a drink,  
And I fall asleep in my chair,  
With never occasion to work or think  
Or pull at my failing hair!

## THE EDITOR 29

"Yes, the editor's life is the life for me,  
With never a cause to weep! . . .  
The editor's life is a snap," said he,  
And fell, as a babe, to sleep!  
And the gods that watch over lucky men  
Stood guard as he slept, until  
His dream wore off, and he woke again  
And called for another pill!

And ever and ever the editor  
Shall sit where the soft snaps are,  
With his highball glass and his humidor  
And the smell of a fine cigar;  
And ever and ever shall dream sweet dreams,  
As he nods in his easy chair,  
Fishing for fish in the placid streams  
Of the Land of Never-a-Care!

## THE REPORTER

**B**EHOLD him!  
He is the omnipresent, the ubiquitous,  
The everywhereful!

He springs from nowhere,  
Eager, as a hound is eager in the chase,  
His nose sniffing  
And his ears a-cock.

In his pockets are many stubs  
Of Pencils gone in service—  
Stubs bit and chewed,  
Sawed off and sharpened again,  
All waiting to leap forth  
And mark their histories  
Down on paper.

For him the copy readers wait,  
And the linotypes,  
The soup, the dope, the autoplate,  
The great presses, tons of steel,  
Elephantine Things that grind  
To make men's fortunes or  
To break their pride.

## THE REPORTER 29

Into the thick of life he plunges,  
Into its comedies, its tragedies,  
Its heartbreaks and its romances!  
Here listening to the halting lies  
Of a too willing witness;  
There viewing the remains  
Of a hooch-driven Juggernaut!  
Or dolled up for the party,  
Taking names of those present  
At Mrs. Thingumbob's Whatchacallit!

Behold him!  
With two fingers he hammers  
His intelligence through  
The wreck of an office typewriter!  
With sang froid and aplomb  
Turns in his offering,  
Watching sourly as it is ruined  
By an incompetent underling  
On a cold-blooded Copy Desk.

He is the Reporter,  
The Omnipresent and Ubiquitous,  
The Everywhereful!

## THE COPY READER

(With joy we give space to this contribution in similar form, answering ours entitled "The Reporter." In printing it, we not only recognize its merit as minor literature, but we go farther and claim to be the first in human history ever to have got a rise out of the Copy Desk. . . . We yield now to the author, The Hon. R. A. McLellan, copy reader, of the New Westminster (B. C.) British Columbian.—H. E. W.)

**B**EHOLD him,  
The copy reader,  
Seated at the copy desk.  
Seated? Nay, writhing!  
Pale and distraught,  
His brow is furrowed  
And his soul harrowed;  
And his lips, scarce moving,  
Call down wild curses—  
Objurgations!  
Imprecations!  
Multiplied damnations!—  
On the Reporter  
As he gazes,  
Dry-eyed, but on the verge of weeping,  
At the copy—  
The offering of sang froid  
And aplomb—  
The ghastly mess,  
Sired by sheer ignorance,  
Out of dam Carelessness,



## THE COPY READER 29

Of misused words  
And mis-spelt words.  
And things that are not words at all;  
Without form and void,  
Lacking in grace,  
Turgid, indigestible,  
And quite without sense of the eternal  
Fitness of things,  
From which he is expected  
To make something;  
While the Reporter,  
With sang froid and aplomb,  
Continues his deadly business.

Behold the copy reader.  
God help him!

## A PRESSMAN'S LOVE SONG

**M**Y LOVE is fair—fair is my love  
Above all else, and she  
Shall hear me as I twang my lute—  
(Or is the thing you twang a flute?)  
My love, she shall love me!

My love, she weighs a hundred tons  
And stands with all her feet  
(I must explain, she is indeed  
Plumb full of feet, a centipede!)  
Fast buried in concrete!

My love is dark, with here and there  
A line of silvery sheen.  
(I don't know where I got that word,  
But "sheen!" . . . it listens like a bird;  
No odds what it may mean!)

I feed her paper by the roll,  
She eats it by the ton!  
She has no indigestion—no!  
That is because she likes it so  
That eating paper's fun!

## A PRESSMAN'S LOVE SONG

And when she's eaten all there is  
To eat, I stop her then  
And oil her up and rub her bright,  
And keep her joints and bearings tight  
Till she must run again.

I love my love, and she loves me! . . .  
And I shall just keep on  
Starting her off and stopping her  
Indefinitely, as it were,  
Till all my paper's gone!

O love, my love! . . . My speeding sweet!  
Hark to this song of mine!  
I love these hundred tons of you,  
You register so fair and true—  
Long may you roar and shine!

## WHAT'S NEWS?

“**W**HAT'S news?” the Cub Reporter said;  
“What's news?” . . . The pink-haired City Ed  
Glanced up and made reply: “Well, Son,  
When everything is said and done  
News doesn't happen every day—  
That makes it news; in brief, I'd say  
That news is something that's occurred  
Unusually, as when a bird  
Picks up an elephant and flies  
Away with him; that's news—get wise!”  
The Cub Reporter scratched his head  
And cleared his throat, and smiled, and said:  
“I see; I understand—I see!  
“You've made it very clear to me.”  
Then hied him forth, shy to enthuse  
But full resolved to get some news.

The day wore on; the clock ticked through  
Its regular way till half-past two,  
Then three, then four, then five, then they  
Who toiled cleared all their junk away  
And grafting passes for the show,  
Put on their hats and coats to go.  
And at that moment, through the door  
Came one disheveled, weary, sore,  
Unhappy and discouraged dub—  
None other than the hopeful Cub!  
His brow was furrowed, and his cheeks

## WHAT'S NEWS? ୨୦

Were sunken! . . . He approaches! . . . speaks!  
"I fear," he says, "I bring distress!  
There is no news! . . . Go stop the press!  
Things are in a most awful way!  
The paper can't come out today!"

They helped him to a chair, poor boy,  
So recently so filled with joy,  
So fat with hope, ambition—Oh!  
It was a shame to see him so!  
"What's wrong?" inquired the City Ed;  
He feebly lifted up his head:  
"I've spent my whole day at the Zoo  
Following the tip I got from you;  
I've watched the elephant all day,  
But not a bird came by that way!"

## THE STEREOTYPER

**T**HERE is a place where the metal's hot  
And sweat is the drink of pride,  
And whether it's first page, last or sports  
Or a double truck inside,  
It all must pass where the pot awaits  
The mat from the molding crew,  
And lightning is slow to the casting room  
When the starter plate goes through.

Antimony and lead and tin  
And steam from the tables pace  
The heart of the man who stands and waits  
With sweat and grime on his face.  
The form comes down to the waiting mat,  
She's molded and dried and shot  
To the muscled crew of the autoplate  
Where the soup is boiling hot.

A hundred tons to a press, they stand  
In line for the plate that locks  
Itself to the cylinder, when it comes  
All trimmed from the casting box.  
But they might wait in vain, and fret  
For the word that will set them free,  
Were't not for the Stereotyper bold,  
And Boss of the Works is he!



## THE STEREOTYPE<sup>99</sup>

You grimy giant, your horny hand!  
A fist to your fist, say I!  
History's made in the plates you swing  
As the mats come fluttering by!  
And when you've finished your sweating toil  
And given the job your best,  
Then who shall grudge you a featherbed  
And the sweets of a Toiler's rest?

## THE PIONEER

**I** SING a song . . . a little song  
Of one of noble birth  
Who plucked his vision from a Star  
And brought it down to Earth.

A Prince he was—Not of the blood,  
But of the heart,—who came  
To lift a peasant from his knees  
And show a King his shame.

Unread but in the truths that lie  
In conscience, so he stood  
To champion as he might the cause  
Of human brotherhood.

Not they who sat in marble halls  
Broke bread with him . . . he ate  
His crust where he was welcome, and  
Quarreled never with the plate.

And I shall speak no empty speech  
Of foolish phrases framed,  
Nor offer gauds and baubles to  
A spirit so untamed;

## THE PIONEER

And I shall weave no garlands . . . nay,  
He would not have it so!  
His strength was not in fawning friend,  
But in a beaten foe.

O Spirit of the Press! . . . This song,  
This tribute now I bring!  
I lay it at your feet, O Prince,  
This feeble little thing!

But grant me grace, that in my time  
I, too, may see afar  
And leaping from the Earth, may pluck  
My vision from a Star!

## TO BEN

**I** PICKED UP a book on Franklin,  
All filled with the things he had done,  
I got the impression that Benjamin was  
An industrious son-of-a-gun!  
He worked in the early morning,  
He toiled through the watches of night;  
I wondered if ever he got any sleep  
Or the time to step out for a bite!

I thrilled with the book on Franklin!  
It stirred me to visions of fame!  
It made me regret that I hadn't done things  
That would polish my lusterless name!  
I envied his mind and muscle,  
I wished that I might have been Ben,  
To march down the years as a Giant, and he  
Of the Great, quite the Greatest of Men!

I closed it, that book on Franklin!  
I closed it and put it away!  
I hid it 'way back, so it wouldn't come out  
And destroy all my fun for the day!  
I'd rather go chasing golf balls;  
For golfing is really more fun  
Than doing all over such strenuous things,  
When Franklin has got 'em all done!

## THE COPY BOY

**I** DO NOT know just where we got the kid  
But there he is! . . . Just fill your eye with him!  
Fatty of head as skinny he of limb,  
No talents underneath his brush are hid!  
It must have been Pandora tipped the lid  
And let him out for us; or it might be  
We plucked him luckless from some Christmas Tree—  
But anyhow, he came to us, he did.

Our Copy Boy! . . . He fills the room for us  
With freckles, and a sort of languorous air  
That seems to trail his Presence everywhere!  
We yell for him . . . we wait a while, then cuss  
And wait again; our story runs a muss  
And we go temperamental, and we say  
Things that are rude, until he takes away  
The output of some other Gloomy Gus.

Some stars fortuitous guard that youngster's course;  
Some special gods protect him as he gropes  
Jarring the timing of our horoscopes  
And plunging us in moments of remorse!  
Yet he may be a Captain of the Bourse,  
Develop into some gigantic pace  
Belying all the freckles on his face,  
This Boy at whom we yell till we are hoarse!

I do not know just where we got the elf,  
But there he is! . . . And there that kid will cling  
While we yell "Copy!" till the welkins ring  
And each man totes his copy for himself.

## THE STAR REPORTER

**I**'M A PIPPIN; I admit it!  
Did you guess it? Well, you hit it!  
I'm the Guy that  
Does assignments  
That are so par-tic-u-lar

That the man who owns the sheet is  
Hypnotized; that's how complete is  
My influence  
In the Office  
Where I'm headlined as a Star!

I'm Aurelius, Epictetus,  
Dickens, Balzac, Meningetus!  
I'm a liter-  
ary Wonder!  
And they let my copy run!

Every blooming, blasted, blighted  
Line of mine is copyrighted,  
And the Copy  
Desk was never  
Known to cut a single one!



## THE STAR REPORTER ३०

All the Cubs look on and wonder  
At my Literary Thunder!  
How they chew their  
Nails and hope that  
They may climb to where I am!

I can mix my moods and tenses,  
Put my shoe-shines in expenses;  
I can split In-  
finitives and  
Never care a tinker's dam!

I'm a Star! . . . A Star Reporter!  
I'm the Editorial Snorter!  
When I go to  
Draw my pay the  
Cashier stands Eyes Front! Salute!

So you've guessed it? . . . Well, you've hit it!  
I'm a Wonder; I admit it!  
I'm the Office  
Cap Courageous,  
With a System that's a Beaut!

## THE FALL-DOWN

**Y**OU missed the story, boys! . . . You missed the story clean!  
You got the facts in your lines, but not the story in between!  
You registered pep and accuracy, you fine-tooth combed the town  
For facts; but getting too many facts is where you chaps fell down!  
You got the Woman, you got the Man, you got the Child, and then  
You wrote them into the story with the stub of a gummed-up pen!  
You missed the story, fellows! . . . You only wrote the truth;  
But back of the facts, that tragedy! . . . the elegy of youth!

You missed the story, boys! . . . You didn't see the Heart!  
It was a wonderful story, but you only wrote the part!  
You wrote of the Man, the Woman and the Child; and then you slept  
On the only point that was worth the ink—the place where angels wept!  
That story reached to the depths of Hell! . . . You only skimmed a tale;  
You only touched the hem of Truth—and that is where you fail!  
You missed the story, fellows! . . . Go, sleep yourselves with pain!  
Go FEEL the thing that you write about, and write it over again!

## THAT OLD SUBSCRIBER

**G**OD bless that Old Subscriber! . . . He drifted in one day  
Fresh from the uncut meadows, all redolent of hay,  
The smell of sod upon him, his boots begrimed with clay.

He came into the office as one who'd done his chores  
And earned the right to mingle with cubs and editors!  
He brought a breath of Somewhere . . . the soul of All Outdoors.

He spoke of Autumn plowing, of clover crops and wheat,  
Of fattening hogs and cider, a smokehouse full of meat! . . .  
The talk he talked was magic, the talk he talked was sweet!

His mind was filled with acres, his vision touched the sky;  
And as he talked, our troubles went drifting, sailing by.  
Man-power was in his sinews, and God was in his eye.

He spoke of bulls and bullocks, of sheep that grazed his hills,  
Of woods gold-clothed in glory that only Nature spills;  
His voice was like the music sung by a thousand rills!

And we who toiled with trifles, who heaped our desks with trash,  
Sifting the stuff disgusted . . . that pile of wordy hash! . . .  
We who must earn our living where minds and moments clash,

## THAT OLD SUBSCRIBER ३

We took our Old Subscriber, our prophet of the hoe,  
Out to the elevator, to lift us down below. . . .  
We took our Old Subscriber to see a Burlesque Show!

Him who had All of Nature, we took to see the dregs! . . .  
He who could speak of chickens and moulting time and eggs,  
We tried to entertain him with painted lips, and legs!

God bless that Old Subscriber! . . . and may he come again  
Fresh from the sod, so simple, so manly and so plain!  
(No burlesque show the next time, though; he nearly missed his train!)

## AN EDITOR SOLILOQUIZES

### I

**U**PON a hill at dawn I stood  
And gazing over sea and wood,  
River and brook, where meadows lie  
Kissing the dipping of the sky,  
I saw the waking of the day—  
A mellow color in the gray,  
Then, crimson-shot, a great round ball  
Rose in its majesty over all.

And when its first grand thrill was gone  
I felt the mystery of the dawn.

### II

Then facing west, from that same hill  
When everything was soft and still,  
I watched the gathering shadows seem  
Grouping, to cover field and stream;  
And in the distance, broad and bold  
Brushings of blue and red and gold  
In one vast field of softening light—  
A regal welcome to the Night.

I pondered, when that thrill was done,  
The mystery of the setting sun.

## AN EDITOR SOLILOQUIZES ୩୭

### III

Closed in by midnight's cheerless grip  
With solitude for companionship,  
I stood upon the hill, and thought  
Of moments in the ages caught;  
Of infinite space . . . of time . . . of fears . . .  
Of fancies, and of smiles and tears—  
Of pride, and of humility—  
Of hope, and of futility!

O thrill of thrills! . . . What is the goal  
Of that deep mystery—my Soul?



## THAT DAY

**T**HAT day we beat 'em to the street! . . .  
O boy, the thrill it spelled!  
The pressroom sweated blood and how  
That gang of newsies yelled!  
Twelve seconds to the good we ran,  
Twelve seconds with a shout  
That cracked the asphalt in the street  
The day we beat 'em out!

Old Barney had the closing take,  
And Charlie locked the chase;  
Kling planed her as she ran the aisle,  
And threw the mat in place!  
Four minutes in the dry, and down  
She shot just nosed by Fate;  
A lever yank, a flood of soup,  
And Murphy had the plate!

That boy had speed! . . . A lightning flash  
Was tame beside his spring  
To slam the starter, bolt her down  
And signal for the ring!  
Once, twice, again! . . . The button pressed!  
She leaped, she shrieked, she sped  
While newsies howled like demons in  
The mail room overhead!

And then . . . we beat 'em out! O boy!  
We skinned 'em neat and clean!  
That battle of the newsies was  
The best I've ever seen!  
Twelve seconds by the heart-beats of  
A loyal gang and true,  
The day that Barney, Charlie, Kling  
And Murphy jammed her through!

## CUB DREAMS

**W**HEN I was a cub with Adolph Ochs  
The men of my dreams were Men!  
And where shall I find the marks I knew  
As signs of the Conqueror then?  
Perhaps it's because, to my youthful eyes,  
Pebbles were mountainous rocks—  
For visions were gold, in the days when I  
Was a cub with Adolph Ochs.

Youth, it is bold, and youth, it must see  
As the Knight sees Holy Grail!  
Glory, to youth, is the one great Goal—  
The end of a hard-fought trail.  
Youth is the spring, that impetuous thing  
That drives as the days wear on,  
Forcing the fight through a challenging Night  
For the joy of a hopeful Dawn!

I used to read of Watterson, he  
Whose sheet was Himself; and one  
Called Dana, the driving Voice behind  
That glorious New York Sun!  
Greeley and Bennett!—I sat up o' nights  
With what I could find to read  
Of the stuff that was in such men as these,  
Men of the warrior breed.

## CUB DREAMS<sup>29</sup>

And faith still lives in the things that made  
These dreams of my youth, when I  
Worshipped afar my favorite Star  
That gleamed in a crowded sky.  
But yet, somehow . . . yet I seem to regret  
Those lifting visions I had;  
I would dream again of the men who were Men  
When I was a hopeful lad.

## THE MAN-MAKER

An introduction! . . . Come meet him, then—  
Pounding his grinder or pushing a pen:  
The Anonymous Maker of Famous Men!

Down in a corner called Pumpkinville,  
In the last white house top o' the hill,  
Lived an humble Farmer, grinding tools,  
Plowing and dragging and cussing mules.  
A Horny-Handed old type was he—  
He pitched his hay with a motion free,  
Till the Local Editor grabbed his pen  
And called him a Prominent Citizen!

He hired a husky with calloused hands  
To slaughter his hogs and turn his lands,  
Got him a stovepipe and started to mix  
In the Game of the Great called Politics.  
Wherever a keg was bunged, he swung  
Convincing manner and fluent tongue,  
Till in course of time he arrived, and won  
The Editor's brand of Favorite Son.

## THE MAN-MAKER ☞

Out from the grasses of Pumpkinville,  
Out from the white house top o' the hill,  
Out from the business of grinding tools,  
Plowing and dragging and cussing mules . . .  
Behold, our hero has ridden his Fate  
Into the halls of the Very Great! . . .  
Back Home the Editor's praises burn  
When he seconds a Motion to Adjourn!

Back Home the Editor shoves his pen,  
Splitting Infinitives now and then—  
The Anonymous Maker of Famous Men!

## THE DESK MAN

**W**HEN Jimmy Jones was a dimpled kid  
He sat on a little high chair, he did,  
Until he became too tubby for it,  
When they raised his seat with the Holy Writ!  
He sat on the family Bible, so  
To manage his victuals till he should grow;  
And when he was grown, he got on the list  
As a Big League circuit evangelist.

Then Johnny, inheriting Jimmy's chair,  
Spent his infant days in discomfort there,  
Until he in turn outgrew it, and took  
His place on the family picture book—  
(You know, that heavy plush album, ripe  
With the bridal scene and daguerrotype?)  
And when he was twenty-one, he became  
A Regular Guy in the Movie Game.

Then the next boy down in the tribe of Jones  
Was Hennery, freckles and skin and bones  
And not much to look at; when he outgrew  
The chair, and he had to sit wider too,  
They raised him up to the provender on  
Congressional printing from Washington.  
And Hennery's known in his town today  
As the best stump speaker since Henry Clay.



## THE DESK MAN ୧୨

Came Howard, the last of the fated four,  
And sat in the chair a year or more;  
Then finished his course—O patient Goat!—  
On a Big, Fat Book that Webster wrote!  
The Fates ground on; and who shall say  
Just what is the end of a Perfect Day?  
For Howard is a Copy Reader now,  
With an ingrained grouch and a furrowed brow!

Let scientists gaze in their books and teach!  
Let the parsons pray for our sins and preach!  
But rearing a boy or growing a pup,  
Yuh gotta watch out how yuh raise 'em up!

## A REPORTER'S WAIL

**I**'D LIKED to have been a reporter  
In the days of Noah's Ark,  
Or when Jonah rode in the Captain's room  
'Midship of a Pullman shark!  
I'd liked to have worked assignments  
In the days when Israel, free,  
Walked dry through the waters all piled up  
By the wind in the old Red Sea.

I'd liked to have worked on the story  
When Joshua stood on a hill,  
And stretching his arm, with a single word  
Commanded the sun to stand still!  
And how I'd have loved to ferret  
The story of Moses out—  
To locate those very bullrushes, and  
Remove all question of doubt!

Why couldn't I have been working  
When Gomorrah and Sodom fell?  
That story of Lot's wife turned to salt—  
What a wonderful tale to tell!  
And the General's Army, circling  
The City, their ram's-horns blown—  
Tooting a tune till the walls fell down  
To the last dod-gasted stone!

## A REPORTER'S WAIL ୧୦

My life has been spent in seeking  
The stuff that is news, but I  
Was out of the picture when Babel rose  
With its peak in the cloudy sky!  
Why is it that one so eager  
Was fooled by the pranks of Fate?  
All of these stories were pie for me,  
And I . . . was born . . . too late!

## THE SPACE PIRATE

**Y**OU have heard of Robin Hood and Jesse James,  
Of the Dalton Brothers riding on the plains,  
And you've thrilled with that most spiriting of games  
That's connected with the holding up of trains;  
You have known the summer landlord and the crew  
In the tipping line, with bright, expectant face,  
But did any bally bandit ever get the nerve of you  
Like the fellow who is always snitching space?

He may be the man ahead of something wild  
In imported shows; or someone's fast candidate  
Who is claiming some delusion for his Child,  
Or a lawyer with a client on his pate.  
He may wear the clothes of charity, and come  
With the itching palm that never knows a shame;  
He may come with rubber heels or beating loudly on his drum,  
But his ultimate objective is the same!

And the Editor, he softly swears and sighs  
As he reaches for the wicker at his right;  
He has grim assassination in his eyes  
When another kind of Pirate comes to light.  
And of all the office pests that ever land  
There is none in all this struggling human race  
Like the oily, silky Pirate with his copy in his hand  
Who has just come in to make a plea for space!  
(All sing!)

## **THE SPACE PIRATE 39**

**Brothers, soak him! Choke him!**

**Chuck him out the door!**

**Hurry up and get the lift in place!**

**Altogether now, let's hand it**

**To that bally brazen Bandit**

**Who is coming in to make a yell for Space, Space, Space!**

**To the fellow who is always snitching Space!**

## EVER OCCUR TO YOU?

**A** LITTLE old table, a moth-eaten table, and you and the rest of us there—  
A stack, old and new ones, of red, white and blue ones, to rise and to fall  
as they may;  
And Barry will stutter and Freddy will mutter while Ray takes a walk 'round  
his chair  
By the little old table, the paste-spotted table, at the end of an imperfect day.

The purr of the kitty that's sitting so pretty, a kitty of hunger and greed—  
The chips softly dropping, the cards idly flopping, and each thinking prayers  
to his god!  
A cinch hand's demureness—the boastful cocksureness of a bluff with a two-spot  
for seed!  
The flight of a rocket! . . . A trip to my pocket to tickle a ten from the wad!

The matrices tumble, press cylinders rumble, the odor of ink fills the air—  
The Night City bellows to "clean her up, fellows!" . . . the Copy Desk yawns  
for its bed!  
They railroad a "thirty" and let her go dirty to catch the 2.10 for Eau Claire;  
And who cares a damn for a War in Siam when a possible flush is ahead?

That little old table! . . . That moth-eaten table! . . . The cover all tattered  
and torn!  
I love its delusions, its sanguine confusions, its dreams that will never come  
true!  
I love its insidious temptations invidious, its holes that my elbows have worn,  
The lure of its wooing when anything's doing like a straight flush of four  
coming through!

## EVER OCCUR TO YOU ?

That little old table, that moth-eaten table, and all the good times we've had there!

Let kings wear their worries and business its flurries, but I shall not trouble my soul!

When we've done our day's capers and sold all our papers, what ho! fellows, drag up a chair,

And we shall hang on till our last chip is gone, by our faith in an ace in the hole!

## "W-A-X-TRAY!"

**I**T used to be, before the days  
    When anything would start the press,  
    When some new thrill slid down the ways  
    Launched on this tumbling sea of stress,  
There used to be an awful kick  
    In that full clarion song, that shout  
That rose, redoubled, echoed when  
    The thing we waited for was out:  
        "W-A-X-TRAY!"

From City Hall to lowliest shack,  
    From mansions where the silk hats dwell  
To homes of misery and back  
    The music of the newsboys' yell:  
The proudest princeling felt the punch,  
    The back-bent serf leaped to its beat—  
Men left their desks, forgot their lunch,  
    To hear that newsboy in the street—  
        "W-A-X-TRAY!"

That used to be; . . . but now, alas,  
    Who cares a whoop or jumps to see  
What wondrous thing has come to pass,  
    Who wonders what the news may be?  
I rushed a bedlam's wall to buy  
    An "extra" from a leather-lung! . . .



## **“W-A-X-TRAY!” 29**

The headline told my eager eye  
That once again I had been stung!  
“W-A-X-TRAY!”

Eight-column screamers say a cow  
Has had a calf! . . . A poster type  
Proclaims the staggering news that now  
Huckleberries are coming ripe!  
And nothing less than half a page  
And seven extras could convey  
The news, if Wales should start the rage  
For wearing pants a different way!  
“W-A-X-TRAY!”

And so I sit and do not shout  
Nor feel a kick, nor rush to see  
What all the racket is about . . .  
Life isn't what it used to be.

## WILLIAM BRADFORD

### I

**B**ENEATH the sod of Trinity  
In peaceful sleep he lies,  
The secrets of infinity  
Oped to his spirit's eyes;  
And that which mortal was has fled,  
But Bradford . . . is not dead!

### II

That soul that dared, it could not die! . . .  
Let flesh the Earth caress!  
But Bradford lives, inspired by  
The spirit of his press!  
A million tons of steel acclaim  
The honor of his name.

### III

To that untrodden Way he came  
A Pioneer, and gave  
His rough-hewn courage to a Game  
That wooed none but the brave.  
Somewhere, somehow, he lives today  
Who cleared his mission's way.

### IV

And I shall not regard him dead  
Who lies in Trinity; . . .  
The Tenant of the structure fled  
Bides in infinity!  
Peace to his soul! . . . and may he sleep  
Safe in his City's keep!

## THE FIRE REPORTER \*

**N**OW this is a story of Reginald Green,  
As slick a reporter as ever was seen,  
Who drifted one day from the grasses, and came  
To the City of Cliffs and the Newspaper Game.

Deliciously raw, he accepted the laugh  
From the Veriest Cub to the Pride of the Staff,  
And took his degrees like the sport that he was  
And ran the same gamut that everyone does.  
They handed him lemons and quinces and limes,  
But he kneeled to the leathers and stuck to The Times;  
And hugging his hunch, went 'way out on the limb  
Till the best of the fellows had nothing on him.

To skip all the details, rewriting, and stuff  
That everyone draws when he runs in the rough,  
This Reginald Green swung his wickedest arm  
When he thrilled to the punch in a fire alarm!  
There was something uncanny in Reginald's taste  
For the elements laying a city in waste;  
And the way he could write it! . . . He rushed you along  
To the yells of the linemen, the clang of the gong!

## THE FIRE REPORTER 39

On duty or off, there was never a glare  
From a blaze in the town but our Hero was there!  
He slept in his clothes, and his dreams were the dreams  
Of chemical vapors and catapult streams!  
And let but a spark start aflame up the street,  
A shower of sparks kicked from Reginald's feet  
As off like a shot he left distance behind,  
A thousand hot stories all hatched in his mind.

Then Reginald died; . . . even so go we all  
When the General Alarm sends its clarion call!  
And because he was good, he was wafted above  
To the region of jasper walls, halos and love!  
But I shall not think he is happy up there  
With nothing but music and peace in the air;  
Nay, happier far were his Heaven below  
Where forever and ever the Fire Gongs go!

And that is the story of Reginald Green,  
As slick a reporter as ever was seen;  
Peace be to his ashes! . . . and may he rest well  
Whose favorite heaven is other folks' hell.

---

\* To Edwin Abell Fitzpatrick.

## I READ A BOOK

**I** READ a book by Dorothy Dix—Dorothy Dix, Her Book.  
I read a book by Dorothy Dix—

A wonderful, cloth-bound bag of tricks!  
A book jammed full of the sound advice  
That's best understood when pondered twice—  
Humor and wit, and a big, warm knowledge  
Of life that you don't pick up in college.  
I read the book that Dorothy wrote  
With a tear in my eye, a sigh in my throat! . . .  
(Oh yes, I'm the fellow she writes about,  
And you are the Woman, I have no doubt!)  
I read a book, and at times . . . O God,  
For a cold, deep bed, a blanket of sod,  
And a flower left on the blanket, fair  
From the hand of a Friend who put it there!

I read a book by Dorothy Dix—Dorothy Dix, Her Book.  
I read, and I dreamed; I saw the life  
Of a Man in a House—a Man with a Wife—  
A Man and a Woman! . . . Walls . . . and a Door . . .  
And what did the Good God build them for?

I read a book by Dorothy Dix—Dorothy Dix, Her Book.  
I read, and pondered philosophy  
Dug from the pains of a Fool like me,  
Dug from the follies of girls like Her,  
Dug from the wreckage of hopes that were,

## I READ A BOOK ३०

Dug from the dreams that came . . . and faded . . .  
Dug from a passion sick and jaded,  
Dug from the depths of a sickening hate  
Of the gods who juggle the wheels of Fate!

I read a book by Dorothy Dix—Dorothy Dix, Her Book!  
I read, and I smiled; I laughed aloud  
At similar fools in a clownish crowd!  
I laughed with Dorothy, laughed to pass  
My distorted Self in the Funny Glass!  
For Dorothy's mirror let me see  
The humorous side of a thing called Me!  
And I laughed . . . and laughed . . . but O, I wept!  
(I wonder, Lady, if you have slept?)

You grotesque shade of a vain regret  
With your grimacing face and empty threat,  
You grinning mummy in retrospect . . .  
You love with the withered garlands decked!  
Stand by, and I pass! . . . I pass my star  
From the things that were to the things that are!  
I sigh . . . and wash my memory clean  
Of the wonderful things . . . that might have been!

## THE ANSWERS EDITOR

**S**HE sits all day with pencil poised,  
She thinks and thinks, and racks her brain  
To find some way to soften love  
And ease a wretched victim's pain.  
Upon her desk are stacked the woes  
Of loved and unloved, crossed and crazed—  
A mass of problems rising till  
No wonder even she is dazed!

Who knows the stabs of Cupid's darts  
As she who diagnoses grief?  
Who knows as she that thorny way  
Of agonies beyond belief?  
Into her sanctum pours the stream  
Unending, from the loved and lost—  
A fevered pile of fervid stuff,  
Of broken hearts by fortune tossed!

And so she sits, and sits and sits,  
And so she thinks, and thinks and dreams;  
And so she reads and reads and reads  
Till tears of pity run in streams!  
And so all day, with pencil poised,  
She racks her brain, she strains her eyes,  
She who must hear love's moaning voice  
And find some way to sympathize!

## THE ANSWERS EDITOR ३०

Outside the hurly-burly world  
Goes on its way with headlong rush,  
Nor heeds the sacred silences  
Where broken-hearted lovelorn gush!  
And she who sits and thinks and dreams  
From day to day, from day to day—  
By gosh, if anybody does,  
She earns her pay, she earns her pay!



THE PROOF READER

*l.c.*  
*e* /

I am the Man ~~Who~~ Reads the ~~Proofs~~  
Of oth~~r~~ people's junk;  
Who follows editorial thought  
That only thinks it think!

*g*

~~Etacoin-omat-atene-tecin-ionatection~~

I am the victim of the Cub  
Who swells important, when  
He does his dolly murder with  
Affairs of other men.

*ai*

I come behind the copy desk,  
That erudite affair  
That earns its l~~v~~ing saying words  
To indigo the air;

*i*

I follow up the dirty work  
Of Number Six machine,  
And it would take a vacu~~u~~sm  
To keep his galley clef~~n~~!

*g* / *u*  
*a*

*l.c.*

I am the ~~guy~~ who has to know

*l.c.*

The ~~Split~~ ~~In~~-fin-i-tive! . . .

O why did Lin~~g~~ have to die

!

I have to check the careless facts  
That office ~~Star~~ indites;  
And they expect me to correct  
The ~~K~~ot our ~~S~~owner writes!

*l.c.*

All ay I struggle with the ~~S~~unk,  
Until my senses re~~all~~!

*d*

There is enough crime in the stuff  
To make my blood congeal!  
But I must toil, a ~~M~~art~~r~~ to  
The ~~C~~ause, so long as ~~M~~en  
Set dirty galleys of the ~~M~~ush  
That speaks a ~~p~~olish ~~P~~en!

*l.c.*

*f i*

Some day . . . some happy day, I'll wing  
My way to ~~d~~istant stars;  
I'll get a job on Venus, or  
On Mercury or Mars!  
And all I ask the gods is that,  
Seeing what they have seen,  
They let my Heaven be some place  
Where every galley's clean!

*l.c.*  
*l.c.*

*l.c.*  
*e*

*l.c.*  
*l.c.*  
*l.c.*  
*l.c.*

## THE MAKE-UP MAN

**T**HE Make-Up Man is a royal old scout,  
Putting stuff in and chucking junk out,  
Filling with bang when the news runs thin,  
Then chucking junk out and putting news in!  
He in his apron and I in my sleeves,  
Chopping and killing, no matter who grieves,  
See many a good yarn foundered at sea  
When the Make-Up Man tips the wink to me!

A jolly old bird is the Make-Up Man,  
Shifting his galleys as fast as he can,  
Sliding a column or dumping a stick  
With a motion that's practiced and smooth and slick.  
And who is the master? . . . and who stands alone  
But the aproned Chief Judge of the Supreme Stone?  
"Fill 'er up, Jack!" and I mosey away  
While he loads in the end of a perfect day.

Dump 'em and jump 'em, hurry 'em through!  
Empty those galleys, you tarrier, You!  
The chase isn't rubber, and Luck stands the gaff  
For the murder of a lead or a paragraph!  
So he in his apron and I standing by  
Cut, dump and fill without batting an eye,  
Till down shoots the form when the stone is clean—  
Down to the Guy with the Molding Machine.

## THE MAKE-UP MAN ☸

Then scrubbing his hornies and swabbing his jowl,  
Adding fresh ink to the grease-garnished bowl,  
Mopping his face with a towel that is bent,  
What should he care when the starter is sent?  
And here's to the fellow who hustles about,  
Putting news in and chucking junk out;  
A long peace at "Thirty" to him and his clan,  
For a royal old scout is the Make-Up Man!

## A QUESTION OF VIEWPOINT

**T**HE Managing Editor posted a notice  
To the Staff, in a moment of ire,  
Concerning the fate that awaited space grabbers—  
A fate that was sudden and dire!  
In words unmistakably fraught with excitement  
He told us no junk was desired,  
And anyone falling for press agent fiction  
Would be swiftly and finally fired.

We fellows resented the dark implication,  
With a feeling that we'd been bemired,  
'Til one who protested reported, sub rosa,  
That unpleasant things had transpired!  
So we backed to our muttons, our side lines abandoned  
And quit with the agent's consorting;  
Yea, Bo! . . . we got back to the unvarnished story  
And restricted ourselves to reporting.

Days passed, as they will, till one day came an offer  
To invent fancy tales for the dollies;  
And our Managing Editor bought a fur coat  
And shipped to New York with the Follies.  
We saw him eftsoons, when he drifted, a-homing,  
To the shop of his early endeavor,  
And he handed us junk that he swore by the Prophets  
Was as straight and veracious as clever!

## A QUESTION OF VIEWPOINT ३३

That unholy liar! . . . That scoundrel! . . . That grafter!

We fell on his form for a show-down!

We murdered that sucker! . . . We handed him plenty!

We gave him a taste of the throw-down!

And as he emerged with the yarn he'd invented

To ponder our views and deductions,

We smiled as we shouted: "We hate to report, Sir,

But we know how to follow instructions!"

## THAT HOME FEELING

**D** ID you ever have the feeling,  
Touring in some foreign country,  
Of an alien? . . . of an Arab  
From his desert snatched in travel?  
Did you ever sense the distance  
Separating you from comrades,  
Though by surging crowds surrounded  
On the boulevards of Paris?  
That aloneness! . . . have you felt it  
When by darkness overtaken  
In the canyons; or when hiking  
You have lost your way, and turning  
Feel confusion and confusion,  
Then come suddenly to compass! . . .  
From the pushing crowd about you  
Steps a single man! . . . you know him! . . .  
He is one you hated, maybe,  
In the village of your school days;  
But you greet him . . . you embrace him! . . .  
He is manna to your hunger!

Or, out there where bands are playing,  
Where the alien hordes, rejoicing,  
Swing in stepping columns, marching  
While the understanding masses  
Cheer and cheer! . . . and you, you only  
Of the thousands, you are lonely! . . .  
Nothing is there in the shouting,

## THAT HOME FEELING?

Nothing in the gala gathering,  
Nothing in the joyous tumult  
For the stranger come to watch them!  
Gloomy is his soul, despondent  
Is the spirit sunk within him! . . .  
Then . . . a miracle! . . . unfurling  
From a staff somewhere, or swinging  
In the column, show the colors  
Of his nation's flag . . . What is it  
Lifts his spirit, sends him cheering,  
Joins his ardor in the clamor,  
Sends him shouting with the tumult  
For the stars and stripes effulgent?

So to me, as are the colors  
To the patriot, are presses! . . .  
So the smell of ink, the clicking  
Of the matrices! . . . the mauling  
Of the forms! . . . the heat of metal,  
And the presses spitting papers! . . .  
Set me where you will, though alien,  
Let me smell the ink, and let me  
Hear the cylinders roaring madly  
And the newsboys crying shrilly! . . .  
There is Home, although to reach it  
I may cross a thousand oceans!



## THE COLUMNIST

(To that vast aggregation of altruistic egoists of whom I have been one. May they all live long enough to forget that there was "The American Press Humorists" until railroad passes gave out!—H. E. W.)

### I

**L**UCK'S blessings on that man who wields a pen  
To sprinkle chuckles down the paths of men,  
To cheer the downcast, lighten leaden hours,  
And as he goes to scatter verbal flowers.  
As fits his mood, so bends he to his task,  
Asking no fortune as the greedy ask,  
Singing his song, and going sun to sun  
His toil sufficient to the day it's done.

### II

Laughter there is, and smiles there are to pay  
His toll in full, as his unselfish way  
He takes; . . . or ever loses that fine sense  
That counts appreciation recompense.  
And in the smiles, come tightenings of the throat  
At some low minor, some more sombre note  
Slipped from the mood that sounds the muffled tread  
Of sympathy, by some white-covered bed.

### III

Friend of the World! . . . Long may you live, to be  
Comforter, strength, to weak humanity!

## THE COLUMNIST ३३

Long may your quips and jests make light the path  
And fend the stings of sorrowings and wrath!  
And when in deeper mood you strike the strings  
That sound responsive chords of greater things,  
May you sing true, and may your note be clear  
To raise the weak, to dry the mourner's tear.

## THE POWER

### I

**T**HERE is a thing called Power of the Press—  
A swift intangible Force, a thing that throbs  
Its influence to the recluse and the mobs,  
To crowded cities, to the Wilderness.  
It belts the universe, it spans the stars,  
Is felt in peace and doubly felt in wars.

### II

Born yesternight, a soul's revolt it stood  
Growing still stronger with the light of day;  
Crowding the weakling, from its tortuous way,  
It blazed its Trail from evil into good.  
Ever and ever stronger grown, it stands  
Symbol of freedom in a thousand lands.

### III

And he who wields the Power . . . who stands alone  
Pressing the button, sending on its way  
A force to bless or curse, to lift or slay,  
To make an empire, overthrow a throne . . .  
Let him beware! This Power is not a tool  
To work the purpose of a Knave or Fool!

## THE MOP

**T**HERE'S a fellow on the job I call The Mop;  
He's a handy guy to have around the shop.  
He can write and he can edit,  
Make a paper up with credit,  
And he keeps a-going till it's time to stop.  
Anything and everything,  
He seems mounted on a spring  
From the way he jumps to grab another's flop;  
He is Do-It-Now's first cousin,  
Worth ten times the average dozen;  
He's a Goer and a Getter,  
Flushing chances like a setter;  
He's the kind of gink that speeds you,  
He just lures you when he needs you,  
Picks you up and, unresistant,  
You become his first assistant  
Just because you catch the swing  
That he puts in everything!  
Pushing, pulling, shoving, carrying,  
Never loafing, never tarrying,  
Always looking, when he's through,  
For some other job to do! . . .  
Nothing ever seems to tire him  
And you envy and admire him  
For the sureness of his hunches,  
For the kick that's in his punches,  
For the way he grabs some chore  
That nobody pays him for! . . .  
Just jumps in and grabs whatever

## THE MOP<sup>2</sup>

Seems to need attention, never  
Stopping for a single minute  
For a thought of what is in it! . . .  
Doing things because it's fun  
Just to go and get 'em done!  
Mopping up—that's what I call it;  
Nothing ever is so small it  
Isn't worth his best endeavor—  
And he'll keep that pace forever;  
And I doubt, I really doubt,  
If he ever will wear out!

And I write these lines to glorify  
That Dynamo of the Shop;  
He's a darned humdinging cyclone,  
Is the Mop!

## THE PINCH HITTER

**D**O YOU know him? . . . He's the fellow who is always on the go,  
Who enjoys the tides of struggle as they lift him to and fro,  
He's the handiest oil for trouble in the bunch of guys I know—  
The pinch hitter.

You can hand him anything from lemons up to apple sauce  
And no matter how you fling it, he will catch your little toss;  
He's the most convenient Goat there is from Office Boy to Boss—  
The pinch hitter.

He appears to know a bit of everything there is to do,  
And he's always sharp and ready with a helping hand for you;  
You can always let him finish what you couldn't battle through—  
The pinch hitter.

He can rewrite, edit copy, clean the office cuspidor,  
Write an editorial, make-up, shovel coal or sweep the floor;  
It's refreshing how he tackles odds and ends of any chore—  
The pinch hitter.

I can see him drifting upward when he meets the common Fate—  
I can see the angels fastening a crown upon his pate!  
I can hear him say: "Say, Peter, take a rest; I'll mind the Gate!"  
The pinch hitter.

## THE PINCH HITTER<sup>29</sup>

You who don't appreciate him, who consider him a mark—  
You who think he's just a little fish to feed a hungry shark,  
Drive her easy or she'll buck you! . . . and be careful how you park  
The pinch hitter.

Here's my hand and my respects, Sir! . . . Here's a hearty cheer for you,  
Darn your buttons, while you're doing all the helpful things you do  
You are piling up pure glory for the Day when you are through—  
You Pinch Hitter!

## THE DREAMERS

I'D LIKE to know Gutenberg now;  
I'd like to just watch him, and guess  
What's going on back of his brow  
As he gapes at a rotary press.  
I'd like to be with him, to stroll  
Through the room where the cylinders grind—  
I'd just like to see  
What reactions might be  
In the working of Gutenberg's mind!

I'd like to know Morse, could he come  
And gaze on the marvels of Now!  
I'd like to ask Morse if he knew  
Where his dream-thought was destined, somehow!  
"What hath God wrought?" . . . Flashed lazily then  
A message too halting and slow!  
And I'd like to see Morse  
Trace the unwired course  
Of the thing that is called Radio!

Speed presses! Flash news! 'Round the world  
Hath intercourse welded a thought!  
On the breath of an instant are whirled  
The dreams of the planets men caught.  
And O! I would like to see Morse  
And Gutenberg, they whose brains gleamed,  
Flashed, died in the clay  
At the end of their day,  
Leaving more than they ever had dreamed.



## THE ROPED GOAT

**I** HAD a chance; . . . a story broke  
That had the guts; the Desk called me  
And said: "Young man, go out and see  
What you can do with this . . . The Folk  
It's all about are up in G . . .  
And say, we go to press at three!"

I hit the bricks. The usual stuff,  
A little skirmishing, and then  
To buttonhole a coupla men  
Inside the gag; then, with enough  
To make a spread, I struck a lope  
To office, where I typed the dope.

I turned it in. It was a peach!  
I wrote that yarn from where it lay!  
It was my cub's red-letter day—  
Its height I'd hardly dared to reach.  
It was the sort of yarn cubs pray  
To get a chance to write, some way.

I searched the sheet at 3.15;  
I fine-toothed-combed it line by line  
To find that red-hot yarn of mine!  
Read every line, then in between.  
At last I found it, cut to chaff—  
A poor, lost, orphaned paragraph!

## THE ROPED GOAT??

And I shall never feel the same  
    Mad thrill I felt at what I wrote;  
    And I shall never hear my Goat  
Bleat half so sadly in the Game  
    As when I searched that sheet to see  
    What some darned dub had done to me!

Somewhere there must exist a hell  
    For copy-readers who employ  
    Their witless minds in killing joy  
And sounding young Ambition's knell!  
    And there, I know by every sign  
    Is he who roped that Goat of mine!

## FOR A' THAT AN' SOME O' THIS

(As Mr. R. Burns remarked in his Watchacallit to What'sisname:

"A chiel's amang ye takin' notes, and, faith, he'll prent it," or words to that effect.)

A CUB and a stub and a nose for news  
And a pad and a jab at Truth;  
A toss of the coin to win or lose,  
And a plunge in the full of youth.  
The growl of the Desk, and a pencil blue  
Bites into a work of Art—  
A Number Two head and the stuff goes through  
Right straight from a young cub's heart.

A chop and a take; the matrices click  
As they fall into line, and then  
It's down to the stone on the double-quick—  
To the stone and the make-up men.  
A slap and a dash, and a cut and fill!—  
It's in with an ad, and out  
With a hunk of bang that comes down kill,  
Of bang that is fat and stout.

A race down the aisle to the molding machine  
Where the stereotypers wait;  
A roll and a dry and she comes out clean,

## FOR A' THAT AN' SOME O' THIS?

All set for the autoplate.  
Antimony and tin and lead  
Like a breath from the depths of hell! . . .  
A rush and a shout, full speed ahead,  
And the shot of a newsboy's yell!

Now one shall weep at the printed sheet,  
And one shall leap and enthuse  
When a story runs in the crowded street  
From the cub with a nose for news.

## ADVICE-TO-THE-LOVELORN

**A**DVICE-TO-THE-LOVELORN sat in state  
In the hole that he called his den,  
And pondered deeply the swing of Fate  
In affairs of the things called Men;  
He lit his pipe and he puffed away  
And he stroked his whiskery face  
As he muttered: "Well, it's a sorry day  
For the rest of the human race!

"Now I—I never have fooled with love  
Nor stuff of the heart, not I!  
I never have sung with the turtle dove  
Nor heaved with a lover's sigh.  
I'm Sister Anna, the Lover's Friend,  
And they come to me for advice;  
I throb for them, but I don't unbend—  
I am built like a cake of ice!

"I know the dope! . . . I know this game  
From Eve to the crack of doom!  
And ever and ever it's all the same,  
And the sum of it all is gloom!  
For I can read, and the thing I read  
Is a story of grief and pain;  
For a lover's heart, it will always bleed,  
Yet he'll do it all over again!

## ADVICE-TO-THE-LOVELORN 29

"And the Girl . . . poor thing! I almost weep  
As I think of her troubled plight!  
Can't eat, can't work, can't dance nor sleep,  
And bathes in her tears all night!  
And Sister Anna will calm their fears  
And tell them that love is true,  
But the saline bath of a young love's tears  
Is a picture in deep dark blue!"

Advice-to-the-Lovelorn sat alone  
And stroked at his beard, did he,  
And muttered with Puck in a sneering tone:  
"What fools these mortals be!"

## THE SOUP

**A**NTIMONY and tin and lead,  
Hot as hell till she boils a head! . . .  
Hot as hell and popping to go  
When they shoot the matrix down below!

The typewriters click and the pencils fight,  
Cutting and adding to get it right!  
Slam goes the stuff to the copy chopper,  
Bang down the room to the lino's hopper!  
Rattle and slap to the galley—whoof! . . .  
Hurry on back with the dirty proof!  
Come on, fellows, this yarn's a scoop,  
And hot as hell is the boiling soup!

Rush her, push her, get her in quick! . . .  
Swing that lock on the shooting stick!  
Down she goes to the molding machine  
For a nice deep mat, all pretty and clean!  
Down goes the mat—here she comes! . . . stand by!  
Here comes the bell; watch out for your eye!  
And sweat, you tarriers! . . . who cares a whoop?  
Stick her in, pull her down, give her the soup!

Antimony and tin and lead,  
Hot as hell till she boils a head!  
And let her cool when the last press hums  
With the joy of a scoop when the starter comes!

## GENESIS

**W**HAT did he do when his world was young,  
This giant of giants, men among?  
This guy who roars in the whole world's ears  
So that even the deafest of deaf men hears?  
What did he do when his pants were short  
Who now stands high in the proudest court?  
Why, dig just a little and you will see  
That when this man was a youngster he  
Sold newspapers!

The Governor sits in his big arm-chair  
And frowns on the problems rising there;  
The Senator scowls at the Senate clock  
Or yawns as he drags with the latest bloc;  
The banker goes golfing, of labor weary,  
The broker looks on a prospect dreary,  
And the only rift in the clouds they see  
Is memory's glimpse, when they merrily  
Sold newspapers.

No King, no Emperor ever knew  
The joys of democracy, as they do  
Who start in life with the swing that comes  
Outside the door where the big press hums!  
Those pampered princes of petty power—  
What can they know of the thrilling hour  
That came to an embryo President,  
When he, for the gain of a copper cent,  
Sold newspapers?



## A PERSONAL NOTE

**L**ADIES and Gentlemen, Friends of the Craft:

A personal note to the crew!

A little departure to write a few lines

Of personal greeting to you!

To say, "How's the folks?" . . . to wish you all well

And pass you the cheer of the season;

I don't feel like singing a shop song today,

And of course, as you know, there's a reason.

My mind, it is whirling with visions of fish

And a launch, and the Chesapeake Bay!

I'm wishing to go where the violets are—

I'm aching to hurry away! . . .

To hurry away from the City, and feel

The haft of my rod, and out there

To drink in the glory of freedom, and thrill,

With the joy of the wine in the air!

I'm aching to shift from the grind, and to hear

The music of birds in the trees;

To cast off my lines when the tide's running right

And challenge the winds and the seas!

I'm restless and hungry to smell the salt air,

To catch the fresh turn of the sod—

To go far away from the trifles, out there

Where a fellow can radio God!

## A PERSONAL NOTE ३

And so . . . how's the folks? . . . it's Spring in my heart!

And you? . . . Say, I hope you're all well!

Gosh, it's going to be great where I'm going, to shake

The routine of things for a spell!

And I'm writing to say, while the fever is on—

I'm changing the tune of my song

Just to say I'd enjoy it a lot more if I

Could take all you people along!

## THE CINCH

(As Seen by the Letter Writer)

**A**BOUT the easiest job I know  
Of all vocations here below  
Is running  
A paper!  
You only have to get the news  
And air your editorial views,  
Then set 'em up and make a plate  
And put it on the press; . . . I'll state  
It is the cinch of all the cinches,  
To fill a column of twenty inches  
And then another, and another,  
And lock 'em in, each with its brother,  
And start the press, and get some boys  
To go outside with a heluva noise  
And sell 'em! . . .  
You tell 'em!

Of all the easy things to make  
A wad, the one that takes the cake  
Is running  
A paper!  
Why, I can sit down any time  
And do a paragraph in rime,  
Or write a letter on anything  
Humorous-like, or with a sting!  
The Editor, he doesn't do

## THE CINCH 29

A thing but read my letter through  
And send it up; I think that he  
Depends a little too much on me!  
I notice, when I'm out of town,  
His editorial tone falls down  
    Like thunder!  
    No wonder!

The hardest thing one has to do  
Is getting the proper point-of-view  
    In running  
    A paper.  
And that is where my stuff comes in!  
I catch him when he gets too thin  
And brace him up, and set him right,  
And help the Editor see the light!  
He pulls a bone. . . . I take my pen  
And get him started straight again,  
And when my stuff comes out, I note it  
Is just exactly as I wrote it!  
He doesn't dare to change a line  
In that important view of mine!  
    It fills him  
    And thrills him!

## THE SONG OF THE DEVIL

**W**HEN I was the devil in a small town plant  
In the days of the old print shop,  
I was sticking type about half the time  
And the other half pushing the mop!  
I pushed that mop till the floor was clean,  
Then I took my take like a man,  
And I stuck my thousand in an hour, too,  
Right along with the clean-cased clan.

And I was a devil of a devil, too,  
When brevier was the pin-point size;  
And many a time I have shown type lice  
With a squirt in a new boy's eyes!  
And many a time I have lingered long  
When the work of the day was done,  
At the Gentlemen's Club of the old print shop,  
Jeffing on the make-up stone!

Now where is the devil of the old hand type?  
He has gone with the Dinosaur!  
He sleeps with the Dodo . . . he has gone his way  
To be seen in the shop no more!  
And the old kick press in the junk heap lies,  
And there it will rust and lie  
Till the printers jump at Gabriel's horn  
And the form is a mess of pi!

## THE SONG OF THE DEVIL?o

When I was the devil! . . . O the memories fair  
    In the smell of the old print shop!  
When I stuck brevier about half the time  
    And the other half, pushed the mop!  
Let the world wag on as it will, but I  
    Shall dream when I may, and smile  
With love for the devilish little devil I was,  
    Back yonder a devil of a while!

## THE WISH

**I** WISH I were an Editor! . . .  
I have no love for work!  
The life that suits my fancy most  
Is of the lordly Turk.  
The Turk, they say, who know him,  
Does nothing all the day  
But frolic like an Editor  
And frivol Time away.

I wish I were an Editor!  
I hate to think of toil!  
I'd rather fish and catch a tan  
Where suns of summer broil!  
The fisherman is lazy,  
Sport is his hardest chore;  
He loafs and thinks and thinks and loafs  
Just like an Ed-i-tor!

I wish I were an Editor!  
It's such a cinch to write—  
To sit an easy chair all day  
And dreamless, sleep all night!  
To quaff the wines of idleness  
And smoke the pipe of peace,  
To buddy with the turbaned Shah  
And with the King of Greece!

## THE WISH ☺

And so, I wish sincerely,  
    I were an Ed-i-tor!  
No other joy on Earth is half  
    As worth the wishing for!  
And so I hope I get my wish—  
    If with your help I do,  
I promise I will help to wish  
    Some sinecure for You!



## THE TRAMP PRINTER

**P**UFFY and greasy or pale and thin,  
Making his fodder by hook or crook,  
With a hangover born in a pail of beer  
Or a hasheesh-bhang with a bashibazouk;  
Riding the rods or jumping the ties,  
Sinking his teeth in a stinking pipe,  
Shuffling along from city to town  
For a make-shift job at sticking type!

The old Tramp Printer—Fate rest his soul!—  
Hopping the freights, or if luck ran loose  
Telling his tales where the tail lights are,  
Strutting his stuff in the squat caboose!  
Doing his bit as a raconteur,  
Sticking his string from a lousy case—  
Spouting philosophies as he scratched  
The stubby beard on his weathered face.

Then, when the puff of an engine roused  
His wanderlust, or the voice of Spring  
Called him to join the birds and watch  
The building of nests . . . and everything;  
We knew the signs; in his restless eye  
We read, and left him brooding alone  
Sinking his teeth in his pipe, while we  
Jeffed for the drinks on the make-up stone.

## THE TRAMP PRINTER 29

The old Tramp Printer! . . . and who shall say  
That he was or wasn't, or this and that?  
Reincarnate, does he dwell with gods  
Or roam some sphere with a Homeless Cat?  
His last type pi'd in a lousy case,  
Ducking the foreman's raucous roar  
He came and went, and passing, chucked  
A handful of type in the cuspidor.

And you who sit in your swivel chair  
Tapping the keys of a smooth machine,  
Watching the matrices fall to place,  
Watching the lines born, pretty and clean—  
Watching the matrices swinging back,  
Slipping across and tumbling down,  
What do you know of the vanished days  
When the old Tramp Printer came to Town?

## FUGITIVES

**F**LOATING somewhere in the nebulous air,  
Or hitched to a shimmering Star,  
Or wherever there gleams the aurora of dreams  
Such as dreams of the Hopefulest are,  
There are fugitive thoughts of a book or a play,  
Or a plot that reached never an end,  
And ever and ever they drift on their way  
With the fortunes we never shall spend.

Drifting away in the blue and the gray  
Of a sky that is studded with light,  
There are thoughts that were born on the blush of a morn  
And that never survived to the Night!  
There are men anchored fast to The Job who would soar  
On the wings of their dreams that have fled,  
Who are only held back by the Copy Desk's roar  
For a yarn worth a Number One head!

Oh, life is to laugh! . . . and the Pride of the Staff  
Sits wishing with meaningful eyes,  
For he's just sent his Best to the critical test  
Of the morons where Hollywood lies!  
And the Column Man frowns as he opens his mail  
That is stamped with the stamps he enclosed!  
And why should the Poet turn sickened and pale  
At the Fate of a Thing he composed?

## FUGITIVES ३३

Yet we shall not fret, while we try to forget  
All the fugitive thoughts of our dreams.  
Where we've tackled and flunked, all the stuff has been junked  
And is lost in the glare of the gleams  
That light up the way for such fugitive things,  
As the fragments that flicker and flare  
Do one little turn, till their memory clings  
To their patch in the nebulous air.

## MEMORIES \*

### I

**W**HEN I was a cub reporter,  
Skinny and brash and gay,  
The job was never too long for me  
And never too rough the way.  
I hustled and dug and braced the world  
As none but a young Cub could—  
And the pay I drew was a little thing  
To the joy of making good.

### II

There were Payne and Carter and Hussey—  
Three of a kind, these three;  
Like gods they moved in the city room—  
Like gods, to a Cub like me!  
George Payne was the Czar of the City Desk,  
And Carter and Hussey, they  
Were the grown-up dreams of my dearest hope  
When the Cub should have his day.

### III

There were Payne and Carter and Hussey  
And towering above the three  
Were Grasty and Fabian Franklin; ay,  
And Harwood, a Prince was he!  
And Grasty and Fabian Franklin ruled

## MEMORIES ୧୨

In a kingdom all their own,  
When a hopeful Cub with his golden dream  
Was happy to sweep the throne!

### IV

O visions that seek me waking,  
Memories haunting my bed!  
That day was red with glory when I  
Wrote up to a back-page head!  
And many a scoop has thrilled me since,  
But none as the Big One did  
When Payne looked up with a smile, and said,  
"That's a pretty good story, Kid!"

### V

When I was a Cub reporter! . . .  
I'd not go back to Then,  
For I've traveled far on the rocky road  
That leads to the hopes of men!  
But with much of the journey still ahead,  
There's joy in the backward glance  
To The-Things-That-Were when Men were gods  
And Life was a Cub's romance!

---

\* To the memory of the late Charles H. Grasty.

## THE MARINE REPORTER \*

**T**HE tip o' my hook to Ship Ahoy,  
The guy with the seadog's roll!  
With his two-fingered jab at his daily log  
He's a hoary old salty soul!  
He has done his marine since the Ark was built,  
And the dean of the staff is he—  
He walks with a roll and leans with a list,  
And his beat is the boundless sea.

He's down at the dock when the liner makes,  
He's down at the dock on time—  
For there's something above that a good thirst slakes,  
And the Captain can mix the slime!  
It is three miles out to the breaker line,  
And it's three miles in to the dock,  
And old Ship Ahoy is there with the thirst  
By the clang of the Captain's clock.

No lubber is he, with a beat of bricks  
All hemmed by the concrete walls!  
His swing is the swing of the ocean's roll,  
Out there where the mermaid calls! . . .  
And he swings 'longside with a Ho-heave-ho  
And he climbs to the deck with vim  
As the Captain comes with a jerk of his head  
And winks out a wink to him!

## THE MARINE REPORTER 29

And away to the call of the wink, ahoy! . . .  
    There's stuff in the old boy yet! . . .  
To the throat that's dry, a wink o' the eye  
    Is a sign of a pending Wet!  
And what is the news, O Captain, say,  
    What's new with the world o' men?  
And the Captain will wink to Ship Ahoy  
    And remark in reply: "Say when!"

So the tip o' my hook to Ship Ahoy,  
    The guy with the seadog's roll!  
With his two-fingered jab at his daily log,  
    He's a hoary old salty soul!

---

\* To Admiral Edward P. Duffy.



## "ASK JIMMY" \*

**H**AVE you got one in your office? Have you got a chap who knows  
The ups and down and ins and outs of everything that goes?  
The one I think about, somehow he seems to have the gift  
Of always being able to give anyone a lift.  
It may be something off the bat, or something schemed and laid—  
He may have just been on the edge when all the plans were made;  
But if there is a question, or a single point in doubt,  
You'll hear the wisest of them lift his hopeful voice and shout:  
"Ask Jimmy!"

When Noah first designed the Ark, I know that he was there  
In person of some forebear (you could see them everywhere!)  
And if Noah lost his hammer, or some carpenter should fail  
To have the proper bolt or screw, or angle iron or nail,  
Nobody'd hunt the missing things or get into a stew,  
For every son-of-a-sea-cook on the craft knew what to do!  
They'd all just circle round the ship to him who finds things for us,  
And ease their minds of trouble as they joined the rising chorus:  
"Ask Jimmy!"

Somehow I know that when things end, as things are bound to do,  
And when this earthly travail's o'er and everything's gone through; . . .  
Somehow I know St. Peter'll be a happy saint, to see  
The shade of Jimmy come to join the heavenly galaxy!  
And knowing as I know him, he will throw the portals wide,  
Murmuring as he does: "Say, Jim, don't go too far inside!  
Just hang around the Gate, Old Man; I'll need your help, you see!"  
And henceforth troubled shades will sing, through all Eternity:  
"Ask Jimmy!"

---

\* To James W. Dove.

## SOME PEOPLE FRET

**S**OME people fret when things go wrong,  
When things go wrong in the shop;  
The tremolo sticks in the daily song  
And the office boy pushes the tears along  
At the end of the office mop!  
They weep and fret and cuss and swear,  
But it never seems to get 'em anywhere.

The City Desk is a roaring howl  
When a story goes on the skid!  
It's something fearful to hear the yowl  
And to tremble with fear at the M. E.'s growl  
When a bad scoop lifts the lid!  
They pass the buck, and they kill life's joy  
From the editor-in-chief to the office boy.

Some people fret; as for me, I sit  
And smile as the wails pass by!  
It doesn't seem to worry me a bit,  
For tomorrow is another day for all of it,  
And we all gotta live till we die!  
So weep and fret if you like, and swear,  
It'll never, never, NEVER get you anywhere!

## FREE

### I

**I** AM NOT a city man;  
Things built on a concrete plan  
Fixed in square and curve and line,  
Have no soul to sing with mine.  
Pavements hard and faces set  
With the lines of care and fret,  
People hustling to and fro,  
Nodding as they come and go,  
Time-clocks standing, deadly power  
Measuring business by the hour—  
These, the shackles of the mart,  
Lack the essence of a heart,  
Lack the freedom of the wood,  
Lack the impulse to be good,  
Lack the perfume of the sod,  
Lack the Presence of a God.

### II

Cowl nor cassock come to me,  
For I do not bend the knee  
In cathedral nor in kirk,  
Not with Christian, not with Turk.  
Whirling priests may whirl who will,  
Creeds in valley, creeds on hill,  
They may chant their various ways,  
Praise what gods they choose to praise,  
Lift their arms with holy zeal—  
Real to them, to them be real!  
His religion I respect,  
Bow to East or genuflect!

III

In that place where I abide  
Comes the estuary's tide,  
Bringing salt and health to me  
From the treasures of the Sea.  
Acres stretch, lowland and high,  
Till the meadows kiss the sky;  
'Throned, in glory sets the sun  
When its traveling is done.  
Living things in freedom move,  
Each his fitness born to prove;  
In the wood there reigns the law  
Of the gun, the ax, the saw.

IV

I am not a city man;  
Things built on a concrete plan  
Fixed in square and curve and line,  
Have no soul to sing with mine.

## TWO STORIES

**T**HE King was dead; a kingdom hung  
In balance—for a moment swung  
Beneath the sky, above the tide,  
Beside the road where traitors ride.  
Then from the throats of thousands rose  
A shout; . . . now with a martial swing  
The soldiers march! . . . The boulevards  
Echo the cry: "Long live the King!"

"Run o' th' sheet," the Make-up said;  
"Eight-column banner! . . . The King is dead!"

A child was born; . . . and who shall say  
What came to Earth that fated day?  
What histories dreamed in that small frame,  
Another pawn in Destiny's game!  
Draw close the curtains! . . . Hush the halls!  
Kiss tenderly the curtained eyes  
Where smiling sleeps the Mother Queen,  
Where by her side a Monarch lies!

Around their flag the patriots sing:  
"The King is dead! Long live the King!"

O Presses roar! . . . Come, lightning flash!  
Click matrices! . . . What ho! give way!  
Cry from the throne and from the crib:  
"Another King is born today!"

## LONGING

**I** WISH I were a cub again! . . .  
Those were the halcyon days  
When everything was just ahead,  
When rioting romance swiftly sped  
And dreams illumed the ways!

I wish I could go back again  
And hope, as once I did,  
For fame and reputation won  
By staggering stories I had done—  
Those dream-hopes of a kid!

Reality, it has no thrill  
Like romance; there is not  
The kick in life there used to be  
When I, and other cubs like me,  
Played Johnny-on-the-Spot!

No fire-alarm half rouses me  
As that one did, when I  
Was cub-reporting, and the flame  
Seemed leaping up, to write my name  
On my ambition's sky.

I wish I were a cub again! . . .  
O futile wish! . . . I must  
Go traveling forward, ever on,

## LONGING

My dreams and pet illusions gone  
Or covered up with dust!

But I can sit, this quiet night,  
And I can dream, forsooth! . . .  
A fitting moment I can thrill  
With memories of the cub days still—  
Those lifting days of youth!

## ENVY

**I** WISH I had written that story! . . .  
    Somehow, when I read it I stood  
At the place where it happened and saw the whole thing! . .  
    By golly, that story was good!  
They tell me a cub with a nose for the news  
    And nothing much else worth a darn  
Just happened to be there, and grabbed it off hot! . . .  
    I wish I had written that yarn!

He was only a cub, but he had it—  
    That inborn, intangible sense  
That could swing you right into the thing that he saw—  
    And the story it made was immense!  
It wasn't his style—he can't write worth a whoop!—  
    His spelling's a scream, but at that  
I wish I had written the story he wrote  
    When he caught it red-hot off the bat!

Fine phrases and words without meaning  
    Set down with an erudite pen . . .  
They could never have handled a story like that,  
    For it had to be written for MEN!  
That yarn had a grip leaping straight from the heart,  
    That caught you and hugged you so tight  
You just held your breath while the Cub wrote it down  
    As never a master could write!



## ENVY

I wish I had written that story! . . .  
The Cub? . . . Oh, I guess he'll hang on  
Till he gets the swelled head and attacks for a raise;  
Then another fresh Cub will be gone!  
But whether he sticks it, or whether he goes  
With his dream of Success to the shelf,  
He has written one story that made 'em sit up,  
And I wish I had done it myself!

## TO ALL YOU CUBS

**T**O ALL you cubs who sit and ponder,  
Who watch the City Desk and wonder,  
Who spot your stars and count the hours  
When you shall earn your praise in flowers,  
A word with you; from one who knows  
Your spirit's agonies, its throes,  
Its biting anguishes, its fear . . .  
A word, a passing word, of cheer.

To all you cubs who stand the gaff  
And sigh where you had thought to laugh!  
To all you cubs who see your stuff  
Manhandled, butchered, treated rough;  
Who see inferior minds engaged  
In slaughtering, while you stand enraged  
And helpless, you must quaff the cup—  
But here's a thought to buck you up:

That man who chews your choicest phrase  
And murders it, he had his days  
Of agony, tasted defeat  
And grovelled at Gamaliel's feet!  
Ay, Buddy, once he felt as you,  
As in the dumps and quite as blue;  
He in his time stood by and groaned,  
And your same minor thoughts intoned.

## TO ALL YOU CUBS?!

So let that be your spirit's balm!  
Stiffen your lip, Son, and be calm!  
Rave not, that some inferior wight  
Works havoc with the stuff you write!  
Some day, when you have run the gamut,  
You may read copy, too; then, damut,  
You'll get your full revenge, I'll bet it,  
As all these copy readers get it!

To all you cubs, these words, and may  
You write and live to see the day  
When you may edit junk, and mumble  
Revenge upon all Cubs that grumble.

## THE ORACLE

**H**AVE you a bunion, corn or pimple,  
An undesired mole or dimple?  
Have you a child that's growing simple?  
Tell it to The Editor!  
He'll show you how to fix the bunion,  
To heal a breath caused by an onion!  
An intellectual Doctor Munyon,  
They all consult The Editor!

Perhaps your Thursday girl has blown you,  
Or some sad speculation thrown you,  
Or your rich relatives disown you—  
Write it to The Editor!  
If you can't get it through your noodle,  
Why fulls and fours call for a roodle,  
Or why your wife adores a poodle,  
Just leave it to The Editor!

In solemn state he sits advising;  
The things he masters are surprising!  
So when your doubts come tantalizing,  
Tell it to The Editor!  
With instantaneous wit that bubbles  
He'll solve your aggravating troubles;  
If you would know how money doubles,  
Go ask the "Answers" Editor!

## THE ORACLE ३०

A thousand times his vision passes  
The love affairs of lads and lasses,  
For which a thousand solemn masses  
    Are due the sapient Editor!  
And these few lines to them that edit  
Are writ to their eternal credit;  
A thousand thousand tongues have said it  
    Who tell it to The Editor!

## A SONG OF THE FREE

**O** who would an Editor be,  
    To toil the livelong day  
While out in his field the Farmer free  
Is pitching his fragrant hay?  
Pitching his fragrant hay  
As none but a Farmer may!  
While the Editor edits  
And sweats and edits  
    And watches his hair turn gray?

**O** who would the flimsy scan  
    And wear his soul to grief,  
While out in the field the Farmer's Man  
Is stacking a yellow sheaf?  
Stacking a yellow sheaf  
With ardor beyond belief!  
While the cub reporter,  
That damned reporter,  
    He will not make 'em brief!

**O** who would his columns make  
    To fit a stubborn chase,  
While out in the open the Yokels break  
A furrow in Nature's face?  
A furrow in Nature's face,  
Running a merry race  
With a loping plow-horse,  
A skittish plow-horse  
    That strains to bust a trace?

## A SONG OF THE FREE☪

O who would an Editor be,  
    If he could turn the soil  
Out there in the field with Nature free  
    And a sun all set to broil?  
    A sun all set to broil,  
    Free from a desk's turmoil,  
And who would edit,  
Just sweat and edit,  
    Who could escape the Toil?

## THE TIE THAT BINDS

**T**HERE'S a something in the smell of ink, the roaring of a press,  
That somehow starts the roses in the bleakest wilderness;  
A something in the rattle of the linotype that seems  
To tie the craft together in the misty bond of dreams.  
A something . . . something different . . . something wonderfully good  
That turns a silvery friendship into golden brotherhood;  
That lifts a purpose grandly from the touch of sordid strife  
And lends a growing glory to the common things of life.

You know it, if you've felt it; . . . it has shown its pilot light  
Wherever men have felt the urge to ponder, and to write!  
Down through the darkest ages it has led the broadening way  
From history's nights of ignorance into effulgent day.  
And we who strive together, as we read the walls, and think.  
And we who make our message through the medium of Ink,  
Brothers we are in Purpose! . . . May the impulse of our minds  
Be now and through eternity a golden tie that binds!



## THE HOT TIP

**T**HE City room buzzed with silence when into the room there oozed  
A fellow with long white whiskers, a gink just a little boozed;  
He eyed the sleepy contingent of live wires all half dead,  
And loafing up to the City Desk, he opened his trap and said:

“I’m Noah; I’ve got a story. There’s going to be a flood,  
And take it from me, you’ll never see the amount there’ll be of mud!  
The heavens are going to open, and rain will pour until  
The flood will rise and touch the skies and bury the highest hill!  
I’m building a ship three stories high, and when I’ve put it through  
I’m going to load the animals in—load ’em in two by two;  
I’m going to take a pair of beasts and a pair of birds, of each  
All kinds there are, and keep them safe out of the torrent’s reach.  
I’ve got my orders from Heaven, and now that you know, I hope  
You can give me a first page screamer; I’m Noah—and that’s the dope!”

He turned, and he staggered feebly out by the open door,  
And following his hoary head there rose a cackle, and then a roar!  
“He’s pulling a stunt for Hammerstein!” . . . “Keep your eye on Morris Gest”  
The wise guys chortled and held their sides: “Another uplift pest!”  
And so it will be forever, and so it will be for aye,  
Wise guys will swallow a fairy tale while a real yarn gets away!  
But remember the tip of Noah, ye scoffers who scoff amain:  
That flood was the kind of a hot one, Son, that never will break again!

## THE GOAT

**T**HE Managing Editor scratched his head  
And growled in a deep bass note;  
The City Editor groaned in his soul  
And swallowed a lump in his throat.  
The Copy Desk trembled with sickly fear,  
Stripped clean of its princely poise;  
The whole blamed shop was up in the air  
From the Boss to the copy boys.

For the High Mogul, he wanted to know  
How it came that out on the street  
He had seen folks buying, and actually reading  
His hated competitor's sheet! . . .  
He wanted to know what was wrong with things  
That people appeared to need  
A paper that wasn't a paper at all—  
Nor fit for the public to read!

So the Managing Editor scratched his head,  
And the City Editor, too;  
And the Copy Desk, and the Office Boys,  
And the staff of the sheet, clean through.  
Then the Managing Editor  
And the City Editor  
And the Copy Readers  
And the Reporters,

## THE GOAT 29

And the Heart-to-Heart Lady  
And the Office Boys all went down in force  
To the Circulator's lair;  
And pointed the Finger of Scorn at him,  
And hissed as they pointed: "There!"

## TO MY OWN \*

**I** LIKE *The New York Times*;  
It is a daisy sheet.  
For downright forthright principle  
It's mighty hard to beat.  
**I** like *The Herald*, too,  
And I can stand the gaff  
Of those who think me fast because  
I like *The Telegraph*.

**I** love *The Baltimore Sun*!  
It's my ambition's home—  
A place my heart can anchor in  
And never care to roam.  
And there's *The Picayune*,  
Down where the Creoles sing—  
And where Frank Stanton lived and died,  
Songs of the Southland ring.

**I** like *The Boston Globe*,  
*The Chattanooga Times*,  
*The Times-Dispatch* of Richmond, where  
They used to print my rimes.  
*The New York World and Post*  
I read with pleasure; yes,  
**I** like *The News and Courier*  
And *San Anton' Express*.

## TO MY OWN<sup>20</sup>

I like that *Detroit News*,  
I like *The Denver Post*,  
But of all papers printed, folks,  
The one I like the most  
You'd never find on file  
On any highbrowed shelf—  
The finest paper ever pressed  
Was one I owned myself!

It was a little thing—  
And I was just a kid;  
But everybody read it through—  
At least I know I did!  
There on my wall it hangs,  
My young ambition's prize—  
And there in honor it shall hang  
Until affection dies.

I wrote its leads; I wrote  
Its news; I set the type;  
I worked the hand-press earnestly  
When printing-day was ripe.  
And I shall never know  
The pride that I have known—  
Nor ever read a paper like  
That midget of my own.

---

\* "The University Sun," Los Angeles (1885-1887).

## GRAZING

**T**HEY'VE turned me out to pasture, boys; they've given me some shears  
And farmed me out to flimsy for the balance of my life!  
They've given me a sinecure for my declining years,  
To keep me free from worry and the nervous strain of strife.  
They've got me in an office, in a little two by four  
Away from all the racket and the feverish feel of haste,  
And no one ever comes there, where I sit behind a door  
With a nail file full of flimsy and a dirty pot of paste!

I sit here idly clipping, pasting stocks, assembling briefs;  
My snipping shears drag lazily—it is no job for speed!  
I clip and paste and paragraph life's pleasures and its griefs,  
And fluctuating figures in the wake of human greed.  
And as I clip and paste, I dream! . . . There was a day when I  
Was called a Star Reporter; . . . I was only just a kid,  
But I'd a nose for news that never let a thing get by,  
And they used to hang up clippings of the hottest things I did!

They used to come and pat me on the back; they used to say  
Big things that made me tremble with the glory of the game!  
Somehow, I never seemed to think that there would come a day  
When I'd be sitting smeared with paste, my vaulting spirit tame!  
I was the Kid who scooped them on the Barry murder case.  
Remember it? My story tipped the cops; they got the guy  
And swung him! . . . And I heard my praises sung around the place,  
Who sit today with shears and paste, piling the flimsy high!

## GRAZING ୩୦

They've turned me out to pasture! . . . But I dream, and in my dream  
I feel the thrill of action, and I smile, because I know  
That once I paced the outfit, and across my vision gleam  
The glories of some triumph of my Star days, long ago!  
And I shall clip, and I shall paste, and I shall hold my way  
Till Fate may signal "30," and shall face The-Things-That-Are  
With memories to cheer me and to strengthen, from the day  
When life loomed large before me, from the day when I was Star!

## “THIRTY”

**W**HEN the click of the typewriter's finished,  
    When the grouch of the desk is done,  
    When the last take's chopped and slug-marked  
    And the race to the forms is won;  
When the last mat's molded and steam-dried  
    And the last page plate has been cast—  
When the last web's threaded, the last run made,  
    And the paper is out—the last! . . .

When the work of the day is ended,  
    When the toilers have all signed off;  
When the press-room's silent and darkened  
    And the motors have ceased to cough;  
When a crap-game's on in the mail room  
    On a bench with a single light,  
It's another day gone to the grave of days,  
    And a “thirty” for all—good-night!



## POSTSCRIPT

At 11 years of age I decided to be a newspaper man; for two years published my own weekly newspaper in Los Angeles, Calif. (before Hollywood!) and except for press agenting Sarah Bernhardt and Shubert attractions a couple of years, have never done anything else—except as an avocation—than newspaper work.

Into the years have been crowded incidents all in the day's work, among them:

I've trouped with Roosevelt and seen him assaulted by a silver nut at Cripple Creek; interviewed McKinley, Taft, Wilson—Governors and such dignitaries in plenty; Judges and Jurors, Prominent Citizens and Bums, Senators and Congressmen.

I've stepped over the body of a suicide to examine that of the wife he murdered, while a boy of 12 with the face of a Parisian sewer-rat stood between his little sister and her grandmother who was trying to take her away, and shrieked: "You can't take her! . . . She's mine, I tell you; she's mine!"

I've helped shovel up parts of body and little pools of brain along the right-of-way of a railroad company whose policy did not include safety devices at grade crossings.

I've lived in box cars with hoboes for three days to get evidence of frame-ups by county magistrates and constables, who thrived on the costs of periodical raids of their boarding houses on wheels.

I've smelled the business end of a 45-caliber gun and heard a roughneck remark without a smile: "You know better than to print that." He was wrong; it was printed.

I've witnessed the sentencing of unfortunate human beings by judges worse than themselves; I've seen the same justice release one of influence and jail one without influence, on identically the same evidence.

## POSTSCRIPT 29

I've met good people and bad people—none better, none worse than parts of myself—and I've written for print in every corner of the United States, including Tyler, Tex., which makes it unanimous.

I've cornered, in an obscure hospital, the only survivor who could talk, of a tragedy of railroad neglect in which eleven men were killed, and watched him raise his bandaged hands and try to lift his crushed head as he said with the solemnity of Death itself: "They didn't give us the chance of a yellow dog!"

I've followed domestic climaxes into the Court Room, walked the narrow corridors of a southland pesthouse reeking with smallpox, shaken the hand of a leper in sheer reporter bravado as I afterward shook dice for the drinks.

I've seen seventeen human beings executed, three of them lynched and one of these burned at the stake; I've heard that man's scream of agony as he shouted through the flames: "Tell that newspaper man to tell my father I've gone to Heaven!" . . . The crack of a pistol shot, a roar of brutish laughter were his answer, and my heart was sick and faint as I sat dictating on the prairie to the operator of field telegraph.

All these things and many more I have seen, felt, experienced; and the tragedy of it is that they were all in the day's work—mere incidents; . . . stories that came and went with the passing of edition times.

Sometimes I wonder . . . and looking backward am amazed, that each Today passed into Yesterday, and hope's only thrill was in the expectancy of Tomorrow. And out of all this tragedy, out of all this cumulative experience with its lights and shadows, I remember with sweetness only the opportunities now and then, here and there, of doing good, of spreading a little happiness, of writing into the somber moods of life little bits of sunshine that must have found lodgment somewhere, in some aching heart.—H. E. W.

## CREDIT PAGE

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**T**HIS BOOK is the craft of Ransdell Incorporated; it has been a labor of love with us. Especial credit goes to—

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